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SUBJECT: BRAZIL: RESPONSE TO DEMARCHE ON LIABILITY AND REDRESS UNDER  
THE CARTAGENA PROTOCOL ON BIOSAFETY

REF: A) STATE 011910, B) BRASILIA 123

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¶1. (SBU) On February 11, Post delivered the concerns expressed in REFTEL A to the key Brazilian players involved in handling the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (CPB). The Ministry of Exterior Relations' (MRE) Director of the Environment Division, Counselor Fernando Coimbra, leads the Government of Brazil's (GOB) team dealing with the CPB. He will head up the Brazilian delegation to the upcoming meeting in Mexico City. Coimbra appreciated receiving the USG's input. He told Environment, Science and Technology, and Health (ESTH) Counselor that Brazil - the world's second largest agriculture exporter - was concerned by militant environmentalists. At the same time, the GOB has been a leader on environmental issues in general and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the parent agreement for the CPB, was born in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. Thus, he indicated they would be trying to find a balance on CPB. Coimbra suggested a bilateral meeting with the USG delegation on the margins of the Mexico City meeting. He will also be at the Nairobi UNEP meeting and offered to meet with USG officials there too.

¶2. (SBU) Agriculture Counselor met with the Ministry of Agriculture (MAPA) and discussed the USG concerns. He met with Marcus Vinicius Segurado Coelho, the Coordinator for Biosafety Issues, Dr. Jose Silvino da Silva Filho, the MAPA General Counsel, and Juliana Ribeiro Alexandre, Deputy Coordinator for Biosafety Issues. Coelho tells Post that MAPA takes a similar stance as the USG toward the CPB issues. MAPA officials correctly note, however, that policy is not set by MAPA alone. MRE, led by Coimbra, has the negotiating power. Economic Counselor met with MRE's World Trade Organization office's Celso Franca, who indicated that Brazil would have similar concerns as an agricultural exporter, but also deferred to MRE's CPB team for the definitive GOB position.

¶3. (SBU) COMMENT. Post encourages USG officials to take up Coimbra's offer for bilateral meetings at Mexico City and/or Nairobi. Usually, though not always, agriculture trade interests will trump environmental ones in Brazil. See REFTEL B for example. Here, where Brazil is a major exporter of Living Modified Organisms and agriculture exports play a key role in the economy, there appears to be an excellent opportunity to work together on these sensitive CPB issues. END COMMENT.

SOBEL